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January, 1917.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.

BUREAU OF EDUCATION.

PROPOSED COMMUNITY FORUM BILL.¹BRIEF EXPLANATION OF A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR AND
REGULATE THE USE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDINGS AS
COMMUNITY FORUMS.

PURPOSE.

The central aim of all legislation has been defined as being "to make more beneficial to the people those things from which the people are accustomed to derive benefit." This proposed measure exactly fulfills that practical ideal of the prime business of legislation.

SCHOOLHOUSES NOW USED.

The common schoolhouses throughout the country have been from the beginning and are now buildings "from which the people are accustomed to derive benefit," not only through their use for the formal instruction of children during the day and for the instruction of children and others in evening schools, but through their noninstructional use for adult assemblies of various kinds. But, except as these buildings are used for legally constituted district school meetings, or where such legislation as is here proposed is in operation, this adult use is planless, haphazard, unfruitful of real community advantage, and totally inconsistent with the proper dignity and unifying service of the public school.

THE AMERICAN NEED AND OPPORTUNITY.

The people everywhere are awakening to the great and pressing need which exists in every State and in every neighborhood of every State—the increasing need for an effective machinery for the development of civic spirit and "the manufacture of patriotic common sense"—the need to which President Wilson points when he says:

It is necessary that a simple means be found by which, by an interchange of points of view, we may get together; for the whole process of modern politics, the whole process of modern life, is a process in which we must exclude misunderstandings, exclude hostilities, bring all men into common council, and so discover what is the common interest.

This is *the* problem of modern life.

And wherever eyes are open and the constructive impulse of America is manifesting itself it is coming to be seen that the common schoolhouses present the ready and true opportunity for economically answering this need, for, as the President says:

They are public buildings. They are conveniently distributed. They belong to the communities. They furnish ideal places in which to assemble and discuss public affairs. They are just what we need.

¹For the text of the bill see p. 8-12.

WITHOUT PROVISIONS OF THIS BILL SCHOOLHOUSES IDLE OR MISUSED.

However, in spite of the most patriotic intentions on the part of school trustees and private individuals, the resources of common understanding and Americanism which inhere in the proper adult use of the common-schoolhouses are not being developed and can not be developed without the enactment of such a measure as is here proposed. Without this legally established provision for the consistent community forum use of the public school buildings this is what happens:

Application is made to the school trustees by this or that partisan, sectarian, or other private organization for permission to use the public-school house for meetings to be held under its (private) auspices. If the school trustees recognize that such private use and control of public property, with its tendency to promote partisanship and sectarianism, is inappropriate and inconsistent with the proper service of the public-school house and refuse to accede to such a request, then the school trustees are exposed to the charge that they are showing a dog-in-the-manger attitude, denying to the people that which the people need and desire and to which the people clearly have a right. If, on the other hand, the school trustees grant this sort of request they are confronted with the embarrassing question, "If that private organization is allowed the use of the schoolhouse, why not this one? If this, why not the other? And—where is the line to be drawn?" The trouble which has arisen in connection with the privately constituted "labor-forum" use of a public-school building in New York City and the partial destruction of a rural schoolhouse in Iowa, resulting from jealousy and friction growing out of the permitted private-group use of this building, in the case recently cited by United States Senator Nelson, are but aggravated instances of what may happen in any State where legal provision for the consistent community-forum use of the public-school buildings is not made.

THIS BILL CONSISTENTLY AND CONSTRUCTIVELY SOLVES PROBLEM.

The passage of this measure will obviate the necessity of either closing the schoolhouse, and so making it a monument of wasted opportunity and lack of public spirit, or discriminating between the various private organizations which may seek to use it for meetings, with the risk of rousing jealousy and ill will, by providing for its consistent use by the one organization which really has the right to this use, namely, the single all-inclusive community association of adult citizens.

The city hall is not turned over to this or that section of the aldermen; the State house is not let out to this or that partisan group of legislators; the National Capitol is not given up to the exclusive use of this or that faction of the Congressmen. Each of these public buildings is made the deliberative headquarters of the one all-inclusive body of local, State, or Federal representatives. In the same way this legislation provides that the schoolhouses shall be made available for use, not as the gathering places of this or that biased, private, volunteer group, representing some one partisan, sectarian, or factional viewpoint, but as the headquarters of the community body of adult citizens of each school district responsibly organized for bringing together the different viewpoints that are held by different people and finding "the common sense to which discussion leads" in orderly and systematic neighborhood conference. That is to say, this legislation provides for the realization of the program of

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organized citizenship expression which has been indorsed by ex-Presidents Roosevelt and Taft and which is formulated by President Wilson in these words:

Citizens going to school to one another in the common-school houses to understand and answer public questions, as hitherto only representatives of the citizens have gone to school to one another in the buildings provided for them.

And obviously only such community organization of the adult citizens for the forum use of the schoolhouse as that for which this bill provides is in harmony with the established use of the building for the instruction of pupils. For the children the schoolhouse is not a partisan or a sectarian meeting place but a common ground of citizenship training. To have the building used as the common ground of adult citizenship expression not only means no disharmony with, but means most powerful aid to the effectiveness of the school in this established service. As Commissioner Edward C. Elliott, of Montana, has said:

Nine-tenths of the so-called instruction that aims to make for healthy, active standards of citizenship is devoted to the mouthing of the mere forms of civic existence. Vital instruction in the civic virtues means contact with the real pulsating civic life. The citizenship of the future must be trained in the civic forums of to-day. And the civic forum contemplated in the organization of the community center gives more promise of contributing virility and strength to civic education than any effort that has sought to bulwark political institutions since the days when the Athenian boy became a Greek through vitalizing contact with the life of his elders, and the Roman boy was educated with and by Roman citizens.

NOT A NEW IDEA.

Fundamentally the plan of community-forum organization provided for in this measure is no novelty, no untried, utopian scheme. It is simply the adaptation of the district school meeting idea and practice, which have been in operation throughout a large part of the United States for more than half a century; the adaptation of this established idea and practice to the modern need. All questions as to the feasibility of the community-forum assembly of adult citizens in the schoolhouse for the orderly free discussion of public questions are answered affirmatively and conclusively by the Nation's experience in the district school meeting.

However, it is important to notice the distinctions between that old-established institution and the community-forum organization for which this measure provides. The district school meeting was the deliberative assembly of men and women by neighborhoods to discuss and decide only a limited range of public questions arbitrarily regarded as pertaining merely to the local community institution. In the schoolhouse forum provided for in this bill men and women may assemble by communities to consider and develop understanding concerning county or municipal, State and National matters of public welfare, as well as those of local neighborhood character. The district school meeting was and is, as a rule, but an annual community gathering. The forum assembly of the citizens for which this bill provides may be in session as often as once a week. The district school meeting was and is sometimes a merely formal, dry, uninteresting occasion. The community forum for which this measure provides is likely to become the very center of vital and wholesome interest and benefit to the people.

IMPROVEMENT ON DISTRICT SCHOOL MEETING.

While the community forum organization provided for in this bill exactly reproduces the old school-meeting idea in the all-inclusive community character of its membership, yet in one vitally important particular this modern develop-

ment improves upon that anciently established institution. The "executive secretary" of the school meeting was a specially employed person, who might or might not have any vital understanding of and interest in the great cause of public education. On account of the infrequency and restricted business of the school meeting, the person engaged as clerk might occupy this office as a little "side line" to some private vocation. In the community forum organization for which this bill provides the executive-secretarial service, necessary for consistent and responsible forum organization, is made a part of the proper duty of the public-school principal or his associate, the official in each local community most likely to be free from partisan or sectarian bias.

DIGNIFY AND STRENGTHEN PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE.

A straightforward statement of the need for this legislation in its executive-secretary feature is given by M. T. Buckley, who has done some of the most notably constructive work of community organization that may be found anywhere in the country. He says:

You know and I know that the best men are not attracted to school work to-day. Legislation that will recognize the community secretarial service of the school principal as worthy of public remuneration will help to make school principalship attractive to strong young men; for it will make it look like a man-size job.

It has been my experience, and I believe the experience of every school man who has endeavored to make his school yield increased returns to the taxpayers, that efforts to bring people together for the presentation and discussion of vital problems of community welfare have been met by the criticism: "That is not the sort of work you were hired to do." But we know that we can not do our duty by the children in our schools unless we get the adult citizens of the community together for the discussion of common questions. We know that this is an important part of our work, and we know that unless we do it, nobody will do it in the average community.

Now, the main reason why there should be legislation that fixes a definite remuneration for the service of the school principal or some other responsible person as community secretary is that such legislation will give the official backing to the efforts of the school man or woman which will make it possible for him or her to serve the people more efficiently.

When I speak of the need of this legislation to give authority to the school man for his service as community secretary, I do not mean that it will give him authority over the adult citizenship. It will not and it should not do that, but it will give him authority to serve under the adult citizenship as the town clerk served under the adult citizenship of the old New England town. The greatness that it will give the principal is the greatness of official recognition as the servant of the whole community.

With this work recognized and remunerated as public service, the people will be equipped to get three times the value that they have been getting from their investment in educational property and incidentally will have in their hands the machinery for that genuine home rule which is democracy.

EXPERIENCE OF WISCONSIN AND OTHER STATES.

The provisions of this bill are practically identical with those which have been in operation in Wisconsin for five years and in other States for periods ranging from one to five years, except that this bill includes the provision for which the experience of Wisconsin and these other States shows the need; that is, the definite fixing of responsibility for executive-secretarial service incidental to the consistent forum use of the public schoolhouse. Concerning the experience of Wisconsin, Charles P. Cary, that State's superintendent of public instruction, writes:

The movement for developing the civic, social, and recreational—that is, the larger educational—resources in each community through the use of the public-

school building by adults for civic expression, by older youth for training in self-government, and by the whole community for wholesome recreation has grown in the past few years out of the tentative and experimental stage. We know from the experiences in many places in Wisconsin and elsewhere that systematic community center development is possible only where there is the definite placing of responsibility for executive-secretarial service in each community.

REDUCE CAMPAIGN EXPENSES.

The plan embodied in this bill makes possible the elimination of at least one-half the expenses of political campaigns, and the cutting away, in large part, of the shield behind which corrupt practices operate. Where the citizens are organized for the consistent forum use of the schoolhouses, the trouble and expense to the several parties of hiring halls for public meetings is done away with. When the Australian ballot was adopted, the several parties were relieved of the bother and cost of printing their separate party ballots. In saving expense to all the parties, expense was saved to the whole public. In the same way, but in far greater amount, in saving expense to each of the parties in the matter of hall rent and costs for arranging meetings, expense is saved to the whole public. Concerning this important matter, Secretary of the Treasury W. G. McAdoo says:

The proposal is the essence of common sense. Public schoolhouses are built with the people's money. They are employed for school purposes only a part of each day. They are available every night for public meetings and can be devoted to no better purpose than as civic forums where people may meet and consider the serious, social, industrial, and political problems with which they must constantly grapple.

One of the most expensive items in a political campaign is the rent of halls for public meetings. The suspicion exists that in the past the required money has too frequently been supplied by a few large contributors who had a selfish interest to serve; that they have "grub staked" the successful political party and that it, in turn, has discharged its debt by bestowing governmental favors.

This schoolhouse forum plan goes far toward destroying the necessity for large political contributions; and for this alone it deserves adoption.

BETTER CAMPAIGN AUDIENCES.

Every candidate for public office desires the opportunity to address not only those who would vote for him anyway but citizens of other party affiliations as well. When the citizens are organized in accordance with the provisions of this bill the opportunity is offered to each candidate to reach all the people as he could not without the establishment of this general organization. It is easily possible for the candidates for county, town, and municipal offices to meet practically all the adult citizens of the area they seek to serve, under this plan, by going from schoolhouse to schoolhouse. This, of course, is not possible in the case of candidates for State and National offices, who may not be able to make more than one visit to any city or town during a campaign. The arrangement for large mass meetings is taken care of, however, by the fact that when the citizens in the several districts of any city, town, or rural county are organized for deliberation in accordance with the provisions of this bill, these local organizations are likely to federate into a city-wide or county-wide association under whose auspices occasional meetings may be held in a high-school auditorium or other large hall.

A PERMANENT ORGANIZATION.

While it is a great advantage to have this citizenship organization effected so as to provide in an economical, convenient, and responsible manner for pre-election meetings, the plan embodied in this bill secures a still greater ad-

vantage in furnishing ready opportunity for the public official, after he is in office, to consult with the citizens together regarding the matters in which he is seeking to represent them. It was before such a community organization of citizens as that for which this bill provides that a public official said:

A public official is supposed to represent the people. A good official wants to represent the people. But how in the world is he going to represent the people unless he knows what the people want? And how is he going to find out what the people want unless they get together and give him a chance to talk things over with them?

MEANS OF SELF-EDUCATION.

This community forum organization of the citizenship in small neighborhood units for the consideration of public questions is in harmony with the tendency to recognize that political questions are, in the last analysis, the proper subject matter of adult self-education. So long as the political method was chiefly an emotional appeal to prejudice and partisanship the suitable assembly place was a great hall; but as soon as public questions are regarded as matters not to be shouted about and to develop the mob spirit over, but as problems to be calmly discussed, looked at from every side, and understood, then the suitable assembly is not a great throng, but a smaller group, and the desirable meeting place is a comparatively small room. This is true of the discussion of most complex and difficult political problems. It is particularly true of industrial and social problems. The community forum organization, for which this bill provides, furnishes the best possible medium not merely for the dissemination of information concerning matters of public health, domestic economy, farming, etc., but for the assimilation of this information.

THE EFFECTIVE MEANS OF AMERICANIZATION.

In this bill the membership of the community forum organization is not restricted to voters or even to citizens. The reason for suggesting the inclusion of all adult residents of a public-school district in the organization is that by including the prospective as well as the actual citizens, the community forum becomes automatically a most effective agency of Americanization. For the recent immigrant to have an opportunity to participate in such a neighborhood association is not only to give him an opportunity to make whatever contribution he can to the intelligence of the community, but is to make America mean something real to him. Much thought, energy, and money is being spent upon the problem of Americanization. It is doubtful whether any other agency, or all other agencies together can serve this great purpose more effectively than the community forum organization for which this bill provides.

MODEL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION.

Where the adult residents of any district are organized into an all-inclusive forum association for the presentation and discussion of public questions, the model is established for the organization of the boys and young men and the girls and young women who are above school age but not yet 21 into young people's neighborhood associations for the training in organized self-government which the increasing civic duties to which they are coming presuppose and require. The needs of young people between school age and adulthood for club and recreation opportunities have called forth many forms of institutional effort, such as the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. But none of these, nor all of them together, makes provision for all the youth of any city, town, or rural

county. This need of the young people is not limited to those of a particular religious faith nor to those whose parents are well to do. When the adult residents of a school district are organized in accordance with the provisions of this bill they are in a position to consider and to act upon the needs of the young people.

It may be thought advisable to include provisions for these further community uses of the schoolhouse within the community-forum bill. If provisions for young people's use and for general recreational development are added, however, the distinction should be kept clear between the community forum, which is an authoritative organization of adults, and the community center, which includes young people's activities which are properly subject to direction. The distinction can be kept clear if it is seen that the executive secretary is properly under the community-forum organization while he is properly over the young people's activities in the community center. Provision for the further community use of the school buildings and grounds may be made by adding the following sections, or inserting them after section 4:

SEC. 5. That whenever a public-school building shall have been established as a community forum under the provisions of this act, and upon request to the board of school trustees so to do by a majority of the adult persons present and qualified to vote at any regular meeting, the said board shall designate such building as a community center for the organized training and recreation of the young people of the community, including such activities as may be requested by the said adult organization and approved by the said board, and shall make all appropriate and necessary arrangements for the convenient and proper use of the building for community-center meetings and activities at such times as the said adult organization may request and the said board approve. The executive secretary provided for in the preceding sections of this act shall serve as director of community-center activities, and shall be responsible to the board of school trustees for rendering this service. To organize and direct the community-center activities provided for in this section, the executive secretary shall be furnished such assistants as in the opinion of the said board of school trustees this work may require. The said board of school trustees shall fix the compensation of the executive secretary for his services as director of community-center activities and the compensation of each of the assistants furnished to organize and direct community-center activities.

SEC. 6. To meet the necessary expenses of community-center activities authorized in the preceding section of this act the school trustees are authorized to receive and administer funds appropriated for this purpose by the common council, county, town, or village board or other local taxing body, or, where possessing taxing power, to levy a tax not exceeding ——— per dollar on the assessed value of the property within the area of the board's taxing power.

SEC. 7. In the event of failure on the part of the common council or other taxing body to appropriate funds to meet the expenses of community-center activities authorized in this act, upon the request of five per cent of the number of voters who voted in the last preceding election in city, town, or village, the question whether a tax not exceeding ——— per dollar on the assessed value of the property of any city, town, or village shall be levied for this purpose, shall be submitted to the voters at the next regular election.

SEC. 8. The qualifications for signing petitions and for voting in elections in pursuance of the provision in the preceding section shall be the same as those for voting upon other educational matters.

FORUM PROVISION OF FIRST IMPORTANCE.

The provision of community-center opportunities for the training and recreation of young people is important, and the sections suggested above may well be included in the bill; but the provision for consistent adult forum organization, although a matter of far less expense, is far more vital and important. If both can be secured—well. If only one—then the forum should be first.

LAW NOT COERCIVE.

The enactment of this proposed legislation will not compel any community to make use of its schoolhouse as a community forum. It merely provides the legitimate way in which this building may be used in an orderly and consistent manner where the adult citizens of any district express the desire for this larger use of their neighborhood equipment. The mandatory element in the bill is simply the definite requirement upon the school trustees that they shall serve the properly expressed and appropriate educational needs of the adult citizens, as now the law requires them to serve the instructional needs of the children.

There is no resource of any State greater than its latent civic intelligence. This legislation provides the way in which this greatest of all resources in a democracy may be developed in an economical, constructive, consistent, and practical manner.

FORM A. [Recommended for adoption in States in which persons of all races use the same public school buildings.]

A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR AND REGULATE THE USE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDINGS AS COMMUNITY FORUMS.

Be it enacted, etc.—

That, upon the receipt of written application so to do, signed by not less than ten qualified voters residing in any public school district, the trustees in charge of the public school building in said district shall announce, or, through the agency of the principal of the school established in said building, cause to be announced, the date and hour of a meeting to be open to all the adult residents of said district and to be held in said building, which date and hour shall be not less than one week nor more than three weeks after the filing of the said application and at a convenient time not interfering with the instructional use of said building, and shall make, or cause to be made, all necessary arrangements for the comfort and convenience of the assembly of adult persons for said meeting, and shall direct the said principal to call the said meeting to order and to serve as clerk until the organization of adult persons to use said building as a community forum shall have been properly constituted as hereinafter provided, or until it shall have been decided by a majority of those present and, by residence in said district, qualified to vote that said building is not to be used as a community forum.

SEC. 2. That, if the proposal to use a public school building as a community forum is approved at the meeting provided for in section one of this act the adult persons, by residence in the public school district occupied by said building qualified so to do, may proceed to organize and elect necessary officers and prescribe and adopt by-laws and regulations for the conduct of the meetings of said community forum. The by-laws and regulations as adopted shall show: (1) That the primary object of the organization is public education through the open presentation and orderly free discussion of public questions with a view to a more intelligent discharge of the duties of adult citizenship; (2) that the membership and equal right of attendance and participation in all meetings of the organization includes all adult residents of the said district; (3) that the principal of the school established in said building, or a person associated with and nominated by said principal, and approved by a majority of those present and voting at the meeting at which said nomination is presented, is authorized to serve as executive secretary of the organization.

SEC. 3. That when an organization of adult persons shall have been formed and by-laws and regulations adopted, as provided in the preceding sections of this act, it shall be the duty of the trustees of the public school property to provide light, heat, comfortable seating facilities, janitor service where necessary, and suitable compensation for the organizing and clerical service of the executive secretary, and to make provision for such incidental office equipment and expenses of said executive secretary as said trustees may deem proper, and to make all other arrangements and provisions that may be necessary to enable the weekly, biweekly, monthly, or special meetings of the organization at such times as the organization may designate for its meetings. Amendments to the by-laws and regulations not in conflict with the provisions of section two of this act may be made from time to time as the organization may deem necessary. No public-school room shall be used under the provisions of this act during such hours as it is in use for the instruction of pupils, and the board of trustees of the public school property may make such other regulations as it may deem necessary to protect the physical property.

SEC. 4. That it shall be the duty of the executive secretary provided for in the preceding sections of this act, in addition to serving as clerk at all meetings of the organization provided for in this act, to arrange, publish, and announce such a program for each meeting of the organization as the organization may direct, to communicate with and notify such candidates for public office or other speakers as the organization may wish to hear, to carry on such correspondence as may be necessary to secure suggestive material or information upon such public questions as the organization may desire to consider, and to act as the agent of the members of the organization in transmitting communications to State or local governmental agencies, and as the agent of the State and local governmental agencies in transmitting official communications to the citizens of the said local school district.

SEC. 5. That it shall be the duty of county, city, town, and district superintendents of schools to cooperate with and assist public-school principals or other persons chosen to serve as executive secretaries under the provisions of this act in discharge of the functions of the office of executive secretary, and it shall be the duty of the State superintendent of public instruction to enforce the terms of this section.

SEC. 6. That until such time as executive secretarial service may be recognized and required as a part of the regular work of the public-school principal and provided for in the principal's salary, the executive secretary authorized by this act for each public-school building established and used as a community forum under the provisions of this act shall be entitled to compensation at the rate of ——— for executive secretarial service rendered at and in connection with each meeting of such community forum.

SEC. 7. That one-half the compensation of the executive secretary provided for in section six of this act shall be paid by the board of school trustees out of local school funds in the same manner and at the same time as the teachers' salaries within the school district are paid. The remaining one-half of the compensation of the executive secretary for services rendered at and in connection with community forum meetings in accordance with the provisions of this act shall be paid from the treasury of the State. Application therefor shall be made by the board of school trustees to the State superintendent and shall set forth in detail the number and dates of meetings served by the executive secretary, the number in attendance, names of principal speakers, and topic of each meeting. Such application shall be accompanied by a statement by the executive secretary attested by oath or affidavit setting forth the number of meetings served by him and for which he claims compensa-

tion under the provisions of this act. Upon receipt of such application the State superintendent shall certify to the state auditor the amount due such executive secretary, whereupon the said auditor shall draw his warrant upon the State treasurer in favor of such executive secretary for the amount so certified.

SEC. 8. There is hereby appropriated, out of any moneys in the general fund not otherwise expended, the sum of ———, or so much thereof as may be necessary, to carry out the provisions of section seven of this act.

SEC. 9. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and publication.

SEC. 10. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with the provisions of this act are hereby repealed.

FORM B. [Recommended for adoption in States in which separate public school buildings are maintained for the use of persons of different races.]

A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR AND REGULATE THE USE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDINGS AS COMMUNITY FORUMS.

Be it enacted, etc., That, upon the receipt of written application so to do, signed by not less than ten adult citizens residing in any public-school district, all of said adult citizens being of the race for which the public school in said district is established and conducted, the trustees in charge of said public school shall announce, or, through the agency of the principal of said school, cause to be announced, the date and hour of a meeting to be open to all the adult persons of the race for which said school is established and conducted residing in said district and to be held in said building, which date and hour shall be not less than one week, nor more than three weeks after the filing of the said application and at a convenient time not interfering with the instructional use of said building, and shall make, or cause to be made, all necessary arrangements for the comfort and convenience of the assembly of adult persons for said meeting, and shall direct the said principal to call the said meeting to order and to serve as clerk until the organization of adult persons to use said building as a community forum shall have been properly constituted as hereinafter provided, or until it shall have been decided by a majority of those present and, by residence in said district and membership in said race, qualified to vote, that said building is not to be used as a community forum.

SEC. 2. That, if the proposal to use a public school building as a community forum is approved at the meeting provided for in section one of this act, the adult persons, by residence in the public-school district occupied by said building and membership in the race for which the school in said building is established and conducted, qualified so to do, may proceed to organize and elect necessary officers and prescribe and adopt by-laws and regulations for the conduct of the meetings of said community forum. The by-laws and regulations as adopted shall show: (1) That the primary object of the organization is public education through the open presentation and orderly free discussion of public questions with a view to a more intelligent discharge of the duties of adult citizenship; (2) That the membership and equal right of attendance and participation in all meetings of the organization includes all adult residents of the said district who are of the race for which the school in said building is established and conducted; (3) That the principal of the school established in said building, or a person associated with and nominated by said principal and approved by a majority of those present and voting at the meeting at which said nomination is presented, is authorized to serve as executive secretary of the organization.

SEC. 3. That when an organization of adult persons shall have been formed and by-laws and regulations adopted, as provided in the preceding sections of this act, it shall be the duty of the trustees of the public-school property to provide light, heat, comfortable seating facilities, janitor service where necessary, and suitable compensation for the organizing and clerical service of the executive secretary, and to make provision for such incidental office equipment and expenses of said executive secretary as said trustees may deem proper, and to make all other arrangements and provisions that may be necessary to enable the weekly, biweekly, monthly, or special meetings of the organization at such time as the organization may designate for its meetings. Amendments to the by-laws and regulations not in conflict with the provisions of section two of this act may be made from time to time as the organization may deem necessary. No public-school room shall be used under the provisions of this act during such hours as it is in use for the instruction of pupils, and the board of trustees of the public-school property may make such other regulations as it may deem necessary to protect the physical property.

SEC. 4. That it shall be the duty of the executive secretary provided for in the preceding sections of this act, in addition to serving as clerk at all meetings of the organization provided for in this act, to arrange, publish, and announce such a program for each meeting of the organization as the organization may direct, to communicate with and notify such candidates for public office or other speakers as the organization may wish to hear, to carry on such correspondence as may be necessary to secure suggestive material or information upon such public questions as the organization may desire to consider, and to act as the agent of the members of the organization in transmitting communications to State or local governmental agencies, and as the agent of the State and local governmental agencies in transmitting communications to the members of the organization.

SEC. 5. That it shall be the duty of county, city, town, and district superintendents of schools to cooperate with and assist public-school principals or other persons chosen to serve as executive secretaries under the provisions of this act, in discharging the functions of the office of executive secretary, and it shall be the duty of the State superintendent of public instruction to enforce the terms of this section.

SEC. 6. That until such time as executive secretarial service may be recognized and required as a part of the regular work of the public-school principal and provided for in the principal's salary, the executive secretary authorized by this act for each public-school building established and used as a community forum under the provisions of this act shall be entitled to compensation at the rate of ——— for executive secretarial service rendered at and in connection with each meeting of such community forum.

SEC. 7. That one-half the compensation of the executive secretary provided for in section 6 of this act shall be paid by the board of school trustees out of local school funds in the same manner and at the same time as the teachers' salaries within the school district are paid. The remaining one-half of the compensation of the executive secretary for services rendered at and in connection with community forum meetings in accordance with the provisions of this act shall be paid from the treasury of the State. Application therefor shall be made by the board of school trustees to the State superintendent of public instruction and shall set forth in detail the number and dates of meetings served by the executive secretary, the number in attendance, names of principal speakers, and topic of each meeting. Such application shall be accompanied by a statement by the executive secretary attested by oath or affidavit setting forth the number

of meetings served by him and for which he claims compensation under the provisions of this act. Upon receipt of such application the State superintendent shall certify to the State auditor the amount due such executive secretary, whereupon the said auditor shall draw his warrant upon the State treasurer in favor of such executive secretary for the amount so certified.

SEC. 8. There is hereby appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund not otherwise expended the sum of ———, or so much thereof as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of section 7 of this act.

SEC. 9. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and publication.

SEC. 10. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with the provisions of this act are hereby repealed.

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